AGENDA

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

Tuesday, 9th January, 2007, at 10.30 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Karen Mannering**

Telephone **(01622) 694367**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1. Substitutes
2. Minutes - 14 November 2006 (Pages 1 - 20)
3. Kent Highway Services - A 21st Century Service (Pages 21 - 24)
4. Kent Highway Services - our response times to requests for service (Pages 25 - 26)
5. Circular Roads 1/2006 Setting Local Speed Limits, Update (Pages 27 - 28)
6. KHS Tour de France 2007 (Pages 29 - 34)
7. Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme (Pages 35 - 38)
8. The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) - An Update (Pages 39 - 46)
9. A2 Pepperhill to Cobham Widening Scheme, A2/A282 Improvement Scheme and M25 J1b to 3 Widening (Pages 47 - 50)
10. South Street, Deal - Approval to undertake Public Consultation (Pages 51 - 54)
11. A251 Safety Improvements - the need for appropriate speed limits (Pages 55 - 56)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Monday, 1 January 2007

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the Highways Advisory Board held on Tuesday, 14 November 2006 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mr R F Manning (Chairman), Mr T J Birkett (substitute for Mr K Sansum), Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Miss S J Carey, Mr A R Chell (substitute for Mrs P A V Stockell), Mr D S Daley, Mr C G Findlay, Mr W A Hayton, Mr C J Law, Mr T A Maddison (substitute for Mr R J E Parker), Mr J I Muckle, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr A R Poole, Mr R Tolputt and Mrs E M Tweed (substitute for Mr R A Marsh).

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs T Dean.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Harrison-Mee, Director, Kent Highway Services; Mr D Hall, County Transportation Manager; Mr R White, Head of Major Projects; Mr J Calder, Public Realm Implementation Manager; Mr N Johannsen, Director Kent Downs AONB; Mr L Holliday, Network Operations Manager & Traffic Manager; and the Head of Democratic Services (represented by Mrs K Mannering).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes
(Item 2)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2006 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Ashford Ring Road
(Item 3 – Report by Head of Major Projects)

(1) Further to Minute 4 of 11 July 2006, the report detailed progress since outline scheme approval, along with feedback from the two-way Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation exercise. It also presented the scheme layout, examined funding sources and outlined a project delivery timetable.

(2) The Board was asked to support the Phase 1 detailed scheme layout presented to convert the current one-way A292 Ashford Ring Road into two-way operation together with the introduction of a high quality, shared space, public realm environment along Elwick Road, West Street, Forge Lane and Bank Street; and recommend to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Supporting Independence that the Phase 1 scheme be approved and progressed to contract tender, appointment of a suitable contractor and subsequent scheme construction.

(3) The scheme was an innovative, cutting edge transformational project which aspired to be an exemplar, benchmark project and market leader across the UK which would put Ashford firmly on the map in the national context. It offered considerably more to the town's fabric than a standard highway scheme by incorporating a number of key shared space, urban design and artistic features. A high quality public realm would be created by the use of quality materials, landscaping, aesthetically pleasing yet functional street furniture together with the integral use of art and street lighting to bring out the scheme identity and distinctiveness.

(4) Whilst the ultimate aspiration was to provide a quality, shared space environment around the entire Ring Road, the current funding available would not stretch that far. It would enable all of the Ring Road to be converted to two-way working and Elwick Road to be radically changed to a high quality, shared space environment enforced by a new 20 mph speed limit. Subject to the return of acceptable contract tender prices, it was also planned that the high quality, shared space environment would be extended into West Street/Forge Lane.

(5) However, funding constraints dictated though that improvements to Somerset Road, Mace Lane, Wellesley Road and Station Road would be more conventional in form at this stage although with unnecessary street clutter removed and a 30mph speed limit. A new Victoria Road/Romney Marsh Road/Beaver Road traffic signal controlled junction would also be incorporated into the Phase 1 contract providing that the necessary Victoria Road Stopping-Up Order had been secured and scheme funding of £1 million was available via a S106 private developer contribution. Finally, street scene improvements to Bank Street, a scheme that was previously being promoted by Ashford Borough Council, were also being included within the Phase 1 contract, drawing together funding from a number of sources.

(6) The outline design scheme had been progressed to a detailed design layout by the Integrated Design Team of engineers, traffic planners, urban designers, landscape architects, artists and lighting specialists in parallel with further consultation with a range of interested parties to ensure that the final layout provided a high quality environment which catered for the needs of all road users. The overall Phase 1 scheme layout was presented and discussed in detail in Appendix A - Overall Phase 1 Scheme Layout, of the report. Further drawings and artist's impressions of the scheme proposals were presented at Appendices B – F of the report.

(7) It was acknowledged that the re-configuration of the existing traffic dominated, one-way ring road layout to a series of two-way, high quality streets with less traffic lanes would lead to a reduction in overall highway capacity. However, one of the overarching aims of the transport strategy was to minimise traffic in the town centre area by a series of transport measures and car park re-location policy. Indeed, the ultimate success of the Ring Road re-configuration relied upon a host of other transport schemes coming forward in future years.

(8) A comparison of the before/after morning peak hour (0800 - 0900) traffic flows around the Ring Road was presented at Appendix G - Traffic Flows of the report, for the Phase 1 scheme along with further details on the modelling results. In overall terms, the traffic modelling predicted that reversion of the Ring Road to a two-way, partly shared use scheme was viable in traffic terms and any additional congestion would be tolerable and a necessary consequence of providing a sustainable growth agenda for the town.

(9) There had been a total of 48 personal injury accidents around the Ashford Ring Road in the 3 year period up to October 2005. A qualitative road safety analysis had also been carried out based upon the existing accident history which took into account the reduction in traffic speed and change in highway environment which would increase driver awareness and care.

(10) The assessment predicted that personal injury accidents would reduce by around 30% as a result of the changes to the Ring Road layout, a figure which compared favourably with the 44% reduction in personal injury accidents over three years which had been achieved following the implementation of a similar type of scheme along Kensington High Street in London. The reversion of the Ring Road from a fast moving, one way traffic dominated environment to a slower, two-way, partly shared surface environment was

therefore predicted to improve road safety around the Ring Road as well as providing greater accessibility in terms of crossing and accessibility options.

(11) The Ring Road scheme formed part of a broad transport strategy for the town which aimed to reduce reliance on the private car and promote other more environmentally friendly and sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and use of passenger transport. With the reduction in vehicle speeds and regularisation of traffic flows using the Ring Road, traffic noise levels were also predicted to fall slightly and this would provide some environmental benefits.

(12) Whilst the overall traffic related impact on air quality was forecast to be broadly neutral, there were some moderately beneficial improvements in terms of reducing the production of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide. The existing landscape along the Ring Road was poor and the proposed introduction of landscaping, public open space and use of quality materials would provide notable benefits to the street scene environment.

(13) The scheme itself also provided an opportunity to stimulate appropriate development opportunities and would therefore provide moderate benefits for social, cultural, physical and visual connection. In overall terms, whilst a comprehensive Environmental Assessment was not needed to fully assess the environmental impact of the scheme, an initial assessment suggested that the scheme provided a number of environmental benefits.

(14) The vast majority of the land-take associated with the scheme was already classified as public highway and works could be undertaken using the County Council's statutory powers as a Highway Authority. However, there were two small parcels of third party land at Elwick Square and West Square which were required and negotiations were underway to secure the necessary land by mutual agreement.

(15) Officers from both the County Council and Ashford Borough Council had been involved in a number of project groups specially set-up to discuss the progression of the project over the past year. The current scheme that was tabled for approval had been subjected to considerable discussion and had the support of officers from both Authorities together with a number of experts in the field.

(16) All of the emergency services had been contacted regarding the scheme and as part of the Traffic Regulation Order process. All were relatively supportive of the scheme benefits and the increased route choice that reverting the Ring Road to two-way flow offered. However, certain concerns had been raised to ensure that the narrowed carriageway along Elwick Road had adequate breakdown run-off areas and accessibility to building frontages for emergency vehicles. These issues had been taken into account during the design process.

(17) A Public Exhibition of the scheme concepts was held in the Lower High Street, Ashford on 9 and 10 June 2006. The feedback from the exhibition was fairly positive in that there were few objections to the fundamental principles of the scheme and the majority of comments were in support of the scheme. The most common issues raised were cycling provision, parking, rat runs, traffic congestion and road safety implications, all of which had been thoroughly explored through the detailed design process.

(18) The scheme now presented to Members for approval was being vetted through a safety audit process so that it offered a safe and accessible layout for all. A further public consultation exercise would also be carried out following scheme approval and prior to scheme construction to inform the local community of the final scheme layout and implementation programme. Due to the innovative nature of the shared space concept, it was also acknowledged that a comprehensive educational and publicity programme also

needed to be taken forward over the coming months to inform all potential users of the scheme of the changes proposed.

(19) As well as the broader public consultation exercise carried out in June 2006, there had been a pro-active effort to engage a number of other community and business groups in the town. For example, the West Street Community Association was involved in a consultation exercise on the evening of 14 September 2006 at the Oranges public house to debate options for use of the central public realm along West Street. Presentations had also been made to the Central Ashford Community Forum, Ashford Business Community and Town Centre Partnership to inform the groups regarding the scheme proposals and also to answer questions and address concerns.

(20) Following all the consultation carried out throughout the scheme concept and design work, one of the main concerns appeared to centre around the introduction of a shared space philosophy along Elwick Road within a busy traffic environment and its implications for road safety, particularly for the mobility impaired.

(21) In its role as a Strategic Authority, KCC needed to fulfil its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) by ensuring that the disabled community were not purposely excluded from access to goods or services which included the public highway. Similarly, the Disability Equality Duty (DED) applied to KCC and all agencies that undertook work for us by integrating disability equality into the business culture and processes of the County Council.

(22) In terms of KCC Transport Policy, there were two relevant policies in the current Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011. Policy ACC 1, Accessibility Strategy, stated that KCC would work with partners to improve access to all goods, services and opportunities for all sections of Kent's communities. Policy ACC2, Mobility Impairment, stated that KCC would improve access to, and safety of the transport network for people with mobility impairments.

(23) The aspirations of the Ashford Ring Road project were to meet both policy requirements and encourage the use of the transformed Ring Road by all, including the mobility impaired, within a safer highway environment. All scheme proposals were also vetted through the safety audit process to ensure that the needs of all users were thoroughly considered. It was also important to understand that a shared use culture around the entire Ring Road was not being put forward as part of the Phase 1 proposals. The Ring Road would revert to two-way operation with reduced capacity throughout although around two-thirds of the scheme would retain the more traditional highway environment with clearly demarcated carriageways, footways and formal crossing points. However, a shared use approach was being progressed along Elwick Road, West Street and Bank Street in order to provide a much higher quality public realm and user friendly environment.

(24) However, the whole accessibility issue was of great concern to mobility impaired groups and as a result, a specific 'Accessibility Working Group' was covened to address the issues in detail. Representatives from both the Ashford & Tunbridge Wells Access Groups, Wheelchair Users Group, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Kent association for the Blind were involved in a constructive series of meetings and the scheme design had been adapted to address various concerns. For example, vehicles would be guided to use specific areas of the carriageway by the incorporation of landscaping, kerb delineation and colour contrast. Guidance paving was being introduced such that cane users could negotiate the space. Informal crossing points had been incorporated with tactile paving on the approaches to steer pedestrians towards particular crossing areas. Whilst there were certain issues still to resolve, the scheme layout incorporated a number of specific design features to aid the visually and mobility impaired community and encourage them to use

the new public realm. Following further discussions with representatives of accessibility groups the inclusion of a controlled crossing in the vicinity of Elwick Square was being considered.

(25) In overall terms, the scheme attempted to create a much more user friendly environment which reduced the dominance of the motor vehicle although this was not being pursued without due consideration for all users including drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility impairments. Best endeavours had been made to involve and consult widely on the project with all affected parties and provide a scheme that was accessible for all. It was also worth noting that the current fast moving, traffic dominated one-way Ring Road environment was a barrier for both disabled and non-disabled people alike and the intention was to remove those barriers and allow other road users to reclaim the street.

(26) In order to promote reversion of the Ring Road from one-way to two-way flow and to formally restrict vehicles to 20 mph and prevent unnecessary parking through the shared space environment, a number of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) needed to be promoted. The fundamental overarching TRO required to enable the scheme to proceed was the revocation of the existing one-way TRO to allow traffic to travel in both directions around the Ring Road. Due to the importance of this particular TRO, it was decided to promote this Order in association with the public consultation exercise carried out in June 2006.

(27) A plan of the streets affected together with a statement of reasons and the traffic order advertisement itself was included at Appendix I - Ashford Ring Road Two-Way TRO of the report. The advertisement was placed in the local press on 9 June 2006 and reference was made to the Order in the public consultation exercise carried out above. Statutory consultees were approached both during a pre-consultation exercise together with formal notification by letter during the consultation period. No objections were received and the Order was duly considered and approved at the Ashford Joint Transportation Board (JTB) on 2 November 2006.

(28) Further TRO's would be prepared and advertised in due course to deal with detailed issues of downgrading Elwick Road/West Street in the road hierarchy, traffic speed, turning bans, parking, loading and other restrictions at specific locations during the final development of the detailed design. The Orders would be reported to the JTB or this Board as appropriate in due course although there were no outstanding Orders which jeopardised or compromised the ultimate delivery of the scheme.

(29) The current scheme delivery programme including the completion of a detailed design package would be completed by the end of December 2006. Ringway, the County Council's term contractors would commence advance works to revert Station Road to two-way flow from January - June 2006. The main construction contract would be tendered in February 2007 with the intention to appoint a main scheme contractor in April 2007 with a start-date on-site of July 2007 once Ringway had completed their advance works. The main contract would take around 12 months with the scheme completed in July 2008.

(30) One of the key considerations during the scheme works was to ensure adequate traffic management measures were put in place to keep traffic flowing as best as possible and a high priority would be given to ensuring that traffic queues and congestion were kept to a minimum. However, Members needed to acknowledge that there would be a certain degree of disruption to traffic flow during the works in order to complete the bulk of the works within the Growth Area funding constraint of the end of March 2008.

(31) A second phase of the project would hopefully be progressed as a natural successor to the scheme whereby a similar public realm led improvement scheme would

be delivered along Somerset Road, Wellesley Road and Station Road. The ultimate aim was that the entire Ring Road would be transformed in terms of its design, appearance and functionality to support and assist with the future growth of the town centre area over the coming years.

(32) The original Phase 1 scheme was estimated to cost £14.5 million. As a result and following discussions with Ashford Borough Council, the following construction priority was recommended :-

1. Conversion of the Ring Road to two-way traffic working throughout
2. Completion of Bank Street and Elwick Square
3. Reconstruction of Victoria Road / Beaver Road junction
4. Completion of the remainder of Elwick Road from Church Road to West Street, and the start of the 'Ashford Arc' to New Street
5. Completion of the 'Ashford Arc' New Street Square (New Rents Square)
6. Completion of the 'Ashford Arc' to North Street (Somerset Road)

(33) As well as the design fees and construction costs, there were financial implications for future scheme maintenance since high quality, public realm schemes needed to be maintained to a higher standard than the traditional highway environment. A specialist working group of Officers had been set-up to assess maintenance costs and the available budget would be top-sliced to ensure that adequate funding was available for scheme maintenance over the first 3-5 years. After that, it was hoped that a suitable developer tariff system could be adopted by the County Council that would be imposed on town centre development to cover the ongoing maintenance costs of the scheme. The current funding available would allow priorities 1-4 to be progressed to construction although the high quality element of priorities 5-6 would need to be deferred to a future phase.

(34) The total cost of the Phase 1 scheme including fees, works and other ancillary costs was estimated to be £11.3 million although the cost of the works could not be confirmed until scheme tenders were returned. Available funding towards the scheme was also estimated at around £11.3 million as listed in the report. As a result, sufficient scheme funding was available to design, implement and maintain the scheme for an initial period and the report did not seek additional funding approval for the project. Scheme costs would also be actively managed to ensure they did not exceed the available budget. It was also anticipated that further funding bids would be made to central government in future years to complete the entire Ring Road transformation project.

(35) Following publication of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) Sustainable Communities Plan 2003, Ashford was now identified as one of the major growth areas in the South-East with a total of 31,000 homes and 28,000 jobs envisaged by 2031. Detailed masterplanning studies followed which had now led to the development of mutually supporting land use and transport strategies to ensure that the town's future growth was well planned and sustainable.

(36 A Transport Strategy for Ashford had been developed by the County Council in line with central government and County Council transport policy which would also support and stimulate town centre development. One of the key schemes listed in the plan was the need to re-configure the current one-way, traffic dominated environment to a series of two-way quality streets. An early 'mend before extend' approach to the town centre would be crucial, even before significant growth took place, and the transformation of the Ring Road would play a key part in realising the future growth potential.

(37) Ultimately, the scheme would need to secure a better balance between the needs of car users, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, radically improve the environment of the town centre, create a quality of environment that encouraged further investment in the town and strengthen the town centre's economy by making the centre easily accessible for all.

(38) Being a major transformational project, the scheme was likely to have implications for the town in general. As a result, County Council local and Ashford ward Members were invited to attend a series of Special Policy Advisory Group (PAG) evening meetings to discuss the scheme concept and evolution of the scheme design. Members, in the absence of a vote, appeared supportive of the need for the scheme and the innovative layout. All local Ashford members were also invited on a study tour to Holland from 19-21 June 2006 where there were a number of examples of similar concepts currently being proposed for the ring road. The feedback from the tour was very positive.

(39) A report was submitted to the Joint Transportation Board and Ashford Borough Council Executive for consideration on 2 November 2006 seeking support for the scheme layout with reversion of the Ring Road to two-way flow. The recommendation from both the JTB and subsequently the Ashford Executive was unanimous in its support of the detailed scheme layout and progression to on-site construction.

(40) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Supporting Independence and/or the Cabinet Member for Highways that the Phase 1 scheme to convert the A292 Ashford Ring Road into a series of two-way streets be progressed to contract tender and on-site construction during 2007/8.

3. A2 Slip Roads, Canterbury

(Item 4 – Report by Head of Major Projects)

(1) Congestion in Canterbury City was now significant. Queuing traffic occurred for substantial parts of the day and journey delays on all the major routes into and across the City were commonplace. Proposals had been brought forward through the Local Transport Plan and the Canterbury Transport Action Plan to address congestion and provide better travel choice for people accessing the City. The core elements of the strategy were additional Park and Ride capacity for the City coupled with the strategic implementation of Bus Priority Measures.

(2) However, to fully realise the benefits of the approach, a limited amount of new road building would be necessary to make the best use of road infrastructure. In particular, making more effective use of the A2 Trunk which bypasses Canterbury to the Southeast was an opportunity not to be missed. Currently, in contrast to the local roads, the A2 had no congestion and was lightly loaded with traffic. Its function in the Trunk Road network was of "regional significance" rather than national importance and providing access to a regional hub (ie., Canterbury) was a key objective for a Trunk road of this type.

(3) Investigations had concentrated on making better use of the A2 bypassing Canterbury, providing congestion relief to the City without compromising the strategic function that the A2 performed. Trunk Roads were the responsibility of the Highways Agency and could only be affected with their consent. To advance the project a consortium had been formed comprising the County Council, Canterbury City Council, the Highways Agency, Canterbury for Business (private sector) and SEEDA (via East Kent Partnership). The Regeneration and Economy Division had led the consortium study work.

(4) The most obvious way to make best use of the A2 was to improve the three junctions serving the City – at Wincheap, Harbledown and Bridge. All three junctions only

had partial traffic movements and did not allow the full flexibility for traffic that was normal for major road interchanges. Accessing destinations within Canterbury, such as the University campus to the north, could be difficult: for instance, traffic from the A2 Dover direction was forced to use either Bridge or Wincheap and then travel via the City Centre, rather than continue to Harbledown before leaving the A2 and avoiding the City Centre. Initial studies had shown that if all three junctions were improved to allow all movements to take place, substantial re-routing of traffic patterns could occur and provide significant congestion relief in the City Centre.

(5) Technical work had focused on the junction layouts at the three locations to see if additional slip roads could be added to the existing junctions easily. At Wincheap and Harbledown this appeared to be possible, but at Bridge because of the existing junction layout this was more difficult and required the complete rebuilding of the existing junction. In developing designs for the three junctions, cost effectiveness had been a key objective and it had emerged that the new slip roads at Wincheap were likely to be the easiest and cheapest to construct. Design work had therefore focused on Wincheap and the Northwest-facing London-bound on slip had been brought forward for detailed work. This slip improvement represented the best in cost benefit terms.

(6) The slip road had been designed to take minimal land and fit in with the existing junction on the A28 (traffic signals). All the land required was controlled by either the County Council, the City Council or the Highways Agency – all of whom were signed up to the project as part of the study consortium. The estimated cost of the slip road was some £1.2 million, which had been provisionally allocated from the Integrated Transport Schemes package through the LTP. With the detailed design under way, it would be necessary to consult local people, enter into formal agreements with the Highways Agency and carry out the formal legal processes to construct a new road. It was estimated that this could be achieved to enable scheme opening by September 2009.

(7) The key procedural issues were to obtain ministerial approval in principal to the provision of improved junctions on the A2 Trunk Road and to develop the technical details of the scheme sufficiently to engage with local people and submit a planning application. It was proposed that the construction work would be carried out under the new Kent Highway Services Alliance contracts. The on-slip at Wincheap had been submitted to the Highways Agency for technical approval and safety audit purposes, which had been agreed.

(8) The preparatory work for the Dover-bound off-slip at Wincheap was linked to the regeneration of the Wincheap Industrial Estate which was being promoted by the City Council. In partnership working with them, efforts were being made to try and bring forward design and traffic options for the road. Development of possible slip roads at Harbledown was linked to the potential for a fourth Park and Ride site for Canterbury and also required partnership working. At Bridge, the need to serve development allocations in the Local Plan (Little Barton Farm) would require significant additional work.

(9) Once preparatory work on the design and transport impact of the proposals was completed further reports could be brought to Members for discussion. At present costs were expected to be significant and developer contributions would be required to enable the elements of the project to be procured. It was proposed to continue work in the Regeneration and Economy Division to bring forward the remainder of the A2 Slips Project.

(10) Promotion of the overall project had been carried out so far through partnership funding from all the consortium partners, with the County Council element being met initially from the Regeneration Fund and subsequently from the Major Schemes forward design allocation. Further design work to be funded by the County Council would need to

be subject to a bid for funding from the forward design budget. It should be noted that until ministerial approval had been obtained to the overall project, any work carried out on the scheme was at the County Council's risk.

(11) The views of Mr G Gibbens, local Member, were circulated at the meeting.

(12) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Supporting Independence that in respect of the Wincheap London-bound on-slip at Canterbury approval be given to:-

(a) the scheme shown in Drawing No. 13782/21RevA for development control and land charge disclosures;

(b) carry out appropriate consultations with the public and statutory bodies;

(c) seek all necessary consents; and

(d) arrange for the making of all necessary Orders to construct the scheme.

4. Eurokent Business Park and Access Road, Thanet
(Item 5 – Report by Head of Major Projects)

(1) Eurokent Business Park lay adjacent to the A256 Haine Road, immediately to the south of Westwood Cross. It was designated for employment use in the current Thanet District Council (TDC) local plan but little development had taken place to date, except at the northern end. Marlowe Academy lay immediately to the east of the site. It was accessed from Stirling Way, as was the existing school that it replaced. Stirling Way was a traffic calmed residential road and was not considered suitable as the long term access for the Academy.

(2) There was also planning consent for business innovation units on KCC owned land at the SE corner of the Eurokent site, bounded by Marlowe Academy to the east and Eurokent to the west. The innovation units would also be accessed from Stirling Way.

(3) A key aspect of the site was that a new spine road running north/south was proposed which would open up the site for development. It would also provide a much improved access for the Marlowe Academy and for the innovation units and bring relief to Haine Road, which was not designed to current standards and carried an increasing volume of traffic. A section of the new road had been built with development at the north end but the majority was still to be built.

(4) SEEDA were now to develop a 3.85 acre plot at the southern end of the site for employment use. To do this they had to provide access and so need to construct at least a short section of the new road. SEEDA had European funding towards this development but this had to be spent next year.

(5) Thanet DC had recently ended a joint venture that it had with Rose Farm Estates (RFE) for the development of the site. RFE now controlled the northern half of the site and TDC owned the southern half of the site. RFE were obliged to complete the roundabout at the northern end of the new road and the short section of road to the north of it at their expense.

(6) Thus there were a number of aspects coming together which point to the best solution being to build the whole of the remainder of the road to bring the benefits of better access to the Marlowe Academy and the innovation units, access to the SEEDA development, access to the RFE development and relief to Haine Road and helping to bring forward employment at the Eurokent site.

(7) The estimated cost of the road was £4.5m. Part of the cost would be met by SEEDA and RFE but there would remain a gap in the funding. Discussions were being held with TDC about how KCC might help to bring forward the construction of the road. At this stage therefore it was not possible to commit to the construction of the road. However, if the road was to be built next year to a timetable to enable SEEDA to use the European funding, then it was required to make progress with the design and the statutory procedures.

(8) To help meet the programme, KCC had commissioned the design of the road with SEEDA contributing 50% of the costs. An outline planning consent was granted last year but it was necessary to seek approval for the reserved matters. The purpose of the report was to seek approval to the plan for the road shown on Drawing No. 233600/8 and for the seeking of consents to take the scheme forward. Another report would be presented to the Board when the scheme was ready to move to the construction phase, if the funding arrangements had been resolved.

(9) There was an opportunity to bring forward a valuable scheme that would bring many benefits. To enable the opportunity to be seized, subject to the funding arrangements being resolved, the scheme needed to be progressed through design and statutory procedures.

(10) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Supporting Independence that approval be given to:-

(a) the scheme shown on Drawing No. 233600/8 for development control and land charge disclosures; and

(b) the seeking of all necessary consents.

5. Delivering a 21st Century Highway Service
(Item 6 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) Kent Highway Services faced difficult financial challenges in the coming years together with a desire to deliver improved satisfaction of the service in Kent. The report described a way forward to minimise the impact of the budgetary pressures on frontline services and a radical transformation of the management of the service through restructuring and deployment of smart information technology.

(2) On 16 January 2006, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste approved a capital accommodation investment of £17.7m (net) to develop three super depots/offices based in West Kent (Wrotham), Mid Kent (Ashford) and East Kent (Whitfield, Dover), and two satellite depots at Preston (Faversham) and Hayesden (Tonbridge).

(3) Since taking up post in August 2006, the Director of Kent Highway Services had reviewed the plans and worked with the Managing Director - Environment & Regeneration and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste to develop a new accommodation proposal that met operational needs, with no degradation of service, whilst reducing the capital investment required. The new proposal was to:-

- Develop two super depots/offices based in West Kent (Wrotham) and Mid Kent (Ashford) – subject to planning permission - to create two divisional offices from the current three – West Kent incorporating Gravesham, Dartford, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone, and East Kent incorporating Swale, Ashford, Dover, Shepway, Canterbury and Thanet.

- Develop the two satellite depots at Preston and Haysden and an additional satellite depot in East Kent.

(4) Office accommodation would be built around a model of flexible and mobile working and would require investment in technology. The operational service, for example routine maintenance, emergency response and winter maintenance, would be maintained, without a reduction in service standards, and delivered from the network of super depots and satellite depots. It was anticipated that net capital savings from the revised programme were in the order of £3.4m. There would also be reduced future running costs of £0.53m.

(5) As a result of not proceeding with Whitfield there would be an unallocated budget and it was intended that this should be used to invest in a technology programme. This would focus on reshaping existing operational processes to deliver business efficiencies and would:-

- significantly improve the process from fault identification to completion of repair;
- demonstrate lower costs in running the service;
- improve levels of public satisfaction through faster response times and improved communication;
- increase the number of enquiries resolved at first point of contact by the Contact Centre or through web-enabled self-service.

(6) Significant investment was required in mobile technology and business systems to deliver the benefits and this was estimated to be £3.4m. Only by making the investment would KHS be able to operate from two divisions with resultant staff savings.

(7) Kent Highway Services was currently structured by three divisions and a strategic headquarters. The accommodation proposals outlined in the report would necessitate a restructure of the service from three to two divisions. Investment in technology would also involve a review of how activities were delivered to ensure operation in the most efficient way possible and this would inevitably affect how staff worked across the KHS Alliance.

(8) Preliminary discussions had taken place with staff and UNISON to ensure that they were aware of the proposals. It was intended that KHS would work closely with UNISON and Personnel & Development during the restructure process to minimise the impact on staff as much as possible.

(9) On 16 October 2006 Cabinet agreed that:-

(a) The Council would not proceed with the acquisition and development of a site at Whitfield and agreed that KHS would deliver the operational service from two divisions based in super depots/offices at Wrotham and Ashford – subject to planning permission - and three satellite depots.

(b) As a result of not proceeding with Whitfield there would be an unallocated budget and that this should now be used to invest in a technology programme.

(c) As a result of the investment in technology, and economies of scale arising from reducing to two divisional offices, KHS should be restructured to create staff efficiencies.

(d) The Managing Director for Environment and Regeneration be given delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste to take forward and implement the management actions arising from the decisions.

(e) Subsequently the decision was debated at Cabinet Scrutiny who had referred the decision back to Cabinet.

(10) The Board:-

(a) supported the Director of Kent Highway Services on the proposals outlined in paragraph (9) above; and

(b) agreed that a site visit to the proposed super depot in Wrotham be arranged as soon as possible.

6. Provision of 20mph Zones Outside Schools in Kent
(Item 7 – Report by County Transportation Manager)

(1) Following the publication of the Government's road casualty target in March 2000, KCC developed an assessment framework for the selection of 20mph zones and limits. This was approved by Members in September 2000. The framework was designed to ensure that areas where crashes involving child pedestrians and cyclists had been reported or could occur in the future would be identified and prioritised. The framework also included other factors such as the socio-economic background of an area along with the presence of local shops and schools. Specific priority was not given to roads outside schools.

(2) A priority system had been established and a programme of work developed which was funded from the small improvements fund or for larger schemes, the Local Transport Plan. Predominantly, the schemes covered urban areas, typically sections of estates where particular problems had been identified. As 20mph zones and limits would normally include traffic calming measures to ensure "self enforcement", "A" class roads and routes regularly used by the emergency services and buses could not be included.

(3) Annually KCC used the criteria and crash remedial methods to identify further areas where crashes to child pedestrians and cyclists could benefit from the introduction of 20mph zones. If a village or community wished to be considered for a 20mph scheme then they should contact the appropriate Divisional Office. At the present time, there were some 50 schemes in Kent.

(4) The issue of 20 mph zones generally in Kent was now well established and, as a concept, speed limits of 20mph or less outside schools would appear to be beneficial. However before concluding this, a number of issues needed to be considered.

(5) Most activity outside schools took place at the start and finish of the school day with some further movement at lunch times, so logically the limit should mirror those times. The limit would not be required at weekends or school holidays and the lower speed limit should be in place only at those times to be self-enforcing and understood by the motorist. Under the heading "Variable Speed" limits in the DETR Circular 05/99 "20mph Speed Limits" it stated that "Local traffic authorities can make variable mandatory 20mph speed limits under section 84 of the road traffic regulation act 1984. These are limits that change between 20 mph and 30 mph depending on the time of day as specified in the speed limit order. It should be noted that when these variable limits were monitored in trials outside schools very little reduction in speed was observed". In the newly published guidance on speed limits (circular roads 1/2006) the government signals its support for 20mph limits and zones in residential areas, but it made no specific mention of schools or part time limits.

(6) The current view of the Kent Police was that 20mph zones and limits should be self-enforcing. This meant that the majority of limits and zones would require traffic

calming features. Not only would this be restrictively expensive but with many schools on "A" and "B" class roads, such features, particularly road humps could not be used. In addition, traffic calming features would be permanent and drivers might resent having their speed physically reduced when the requirement for slower speed existed only at start and finish of the school day. It was interesting to note that outside most schools, the congestion caused by parents picking up or dropping off children combined with large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists created a slowing of traffic at the very time that it was most needed. Members had also recently considered that physical traffic calming measures should be seen as a last resort to specific crash and speed problems.

(7) There was not a consistently recorded crash problem outside schools. Where a crash record was identified, the current council criteria for 20mph site selection based on reported personal injury crashes remained robust and should continue.

(8) If Members took the view that all schools in Kent should have a permanent 20mph limit or zone, this would involve significant funds being made available. Each site would require the making of a traffic regulation order (TRO) the current cost for making such an order was approximately £1,000. In Kent there were 611 schools (not including independents).

(9) New 20 mph limits or zones would require signs and possibly road markings. The cost of such signing and marking could be around £0.75m (£250 x 4 signs per site = £1000 plus fixing £200 giving a gross figure of £1200) and this would be in addition to any traffic calming which might be required to make the limit self enforcing.

(10) However if variable 20mph limits were to be considered, the cost of each installation would rise considerably. Each site would require a minimum of 4 signs per site (£250 x 4), each sign would need flashing lights to inform drivers that the lower limit was in place (£135 x 4), timers to switch the lights on and off (£300 x 4), an electricity supply to each sign (£550 x 4) and an installation cost of £400 per school. The estimated cost of this would be some £3.6m. In addition there would be an annual running cost for electricity and maintenance.

(11) In agreeing that a school should have a 20mph limit or zone then further questions needed to be considered:-

(a) How far should the limit extend beyond the school? 200m, 400m, 800m.

(b) How many roads leading to the school should be included in the limit and again how far?

(c) With many schools having more than one entrance/exit this could mean that a much wider 20mph zone could be required.

(12) It was known that many children were injured close to their home. If residential areas remained at 30mph whilst the limits outside schools were cut to 20mph, it might be argued that such a policy increased the risk to children near home as speeds would be higher. It certainly did not support the commitment to a data led approach to the work.

(13) Some local authorities faced with the enforcement problems, the need to have the lower limit only at school start and finish times and the potential requirement for traffic calming had opted for part time advisory 20mph limits. Several trial schemes had been implemented in Scotland. The Scottish office report (SEDD circular No. 6/2001) found that: -

- The sites selected for the pilot projects were only in self-enclosed residential areas used mainly by local residents with little or no through traffic. In general, roads which carried through traffic, bus routes or roads which had a

significant volume of non-resident traffic were unlikely to be suitable because of the difficulty in obtaining widespread public support.

- Advisory 20mph speed limits were most likely to be effective in areas where before 85th percentile speeds were in the range 25 to 30mph.
- The length of road covered by an advisory limit should not exceed 600m.

(14) It should also be noted that similar signs to those used on variable speed limits with flashing amber lights to indicate to drivers that an advisory limit was in force would be needed. Although the cost of a traffic order would be saved, the cost of installation would be similar to the variable 20mph limit signs described above.

(15) Members had already signalled their concern about the amount of signing particularly in rural areas. The introduction of 20mph limits or zones would significantly increase the number of signs. In particular the introduction of a 20mph speed limit on a single section of lit 30mph road would also require regular 20mph repeater signs to be used.

(16) It was clear from the information above that if members wished to fully consider a policy of 20mph limits or zones outside all Kent schools a detailed report to Members would be needed providing the following information: -

(a) A full assessment of the likely cost implications along with a recommendation of suitable annual investment and as a result indicate how long it would take to implement the policy.

(b) An assessment of the reduction in child crashes that might result to see if there were justifiable cost benefits to the proposal given that such a policy would inevitably divert funds from other resources.

(c) Open a dialogue with the Kent police to consider the issue of enforcement. If their position remained unaltered then the high cost of traffic calming might become inevitable. As the measures would only be needed for say 2 hours a day then this would be very unpopular with the emergency services, bus operators and the motorist. Consultation with the groups regarding the policy should be carried out.

(d) Clearly if such a policy were accepted then a priority rating system would need to be developed. Crash levels would play a part but speed of traffic, levels of traffic and HGV flow might all need to be taken into account. Such a process would require a very considerable amount of work and would, it was believed be challenged as schools discovered how far down the list they were.

(17) The outcome of various studies showed that effective speed reduction was only likely in specific areas and that in many places reductions in speed were unlikely unless either traffic calming or changes to enforcement were included. Consequently a policy to implement 20mph limits outside every Kent school would seem costly and inappropriate. Rather it was better to target specific schools where problems could be identified and suitable solutions considered. However a more simple solution could be for Government to establish a rule that stated that when the flashing lights outside a school were on then the speed limit was 20mph. With many schools already having flashing lights for school crossing patrols the cost of equipping all schools would be reduced. No traffic orders would be needed and no additional signing.

(18) Mr R A Pascoe moved, Mr W A Hayton seconded that paragraph 20 of the report be amended to read as follows:-

(a) recognising that safety outside schools is paramount, Kent County Council should have specific guidelines for speed limits outside each Kent school, and that Joint Transportation Boards should consider, and recommend to the County Council, requirements for individual schools at their meetings; and

(b) KCC will lobby government for a change in the rules to allow for 20mph limits outside schools by virtue of flashing lights.

Carried

7. Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Highways Design Handbook
(Item 8 – Report by Director, Kent Downs AONB Unit)

(1) The statutory Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan, adopted by Kent County Council, identified the design and maintenance of highways in the AONB as a key issue for action. Issues such as sign clutter, creeping urbanisation and traffic speeds and volume were key issues. The agreed action was to produce a Highways Design Handbook for the AONB.

(2) The Kent Downs AONB unit, working with Kent County Council highway officers, had recruited and appointed consultants, Halcrow, to produce a draft Highways Design Handbook for the AONB. A first draft was on display at the meeting. The report was to make the Highways Advisory Board aware of work currently being undertaken to produce a Kent Downs AONB Highways Design Handbook, share the early draft and to seek early comments and support for the identified next stages including establishing the Design Handbook as policy.

(3) The Kent Downs AONB was a nationally protected landscape – given legal equivalence to the National Parks. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 placed a 'Duty of Regard' for the purposes of the AONB on all local authorities and public bodies when carrying out their activities. The scope of this duty included the design and maintenance of highway infrastructure. The primary purpose of AONBs was to 'conserve and enhance natural beauty'.

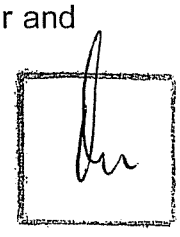
- The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan was produced and submitted to Secretary of State by the AONB Unit on behalf of the AONB partnership in April 2004, the AONB partnership included Kent County Council. Each of the local authorities in the partnership had formally adopted the Plan, its policies and actions.

(4) Adopted sustainable development and travel policies from the Plan included:-

SDT1 Ensure that the need to conserve and enhance the fundamental and special characteristics of the AONB was reflected within the new Regional Spatial Strategy, Local Development Frameworks, Area Action Plans Supplementary Planning Guidance and Local Transport Plans.

SDT5 Measures to reduce the long-term impact of major transportation infrastructure on the natural beauty, amenity and tranquillity of the AONB would be supported.

SDT6 A strategic approach would be taken to the use of road signage, furniture, design and maintenance that promoted or enhanced the local character and distinctiveness of the AONB, and promoted better route management.



SDT8 Seek sustainable and effective solutions to identified problems or rural traffic density, speed and type of traffic particularly in rural settlements or where there was a conflict with walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

(5) A series of actions were adopted to respond to the policies, the key action with regard to the report was Action SDT 8 ..'produce environmental and landscape guidelines for the management of Kent Downs roads'.

(6) The aim of the Highways Design Handbook was to encourage a more appropriate approach to the design of existing and new highways (streetscapes) in the Kent Downs. The Handbook was intended to reverse the trend towards generality and restore the distinctive quality and character of the highways or streetscapes in the Downs but would be subject to signing legislation and guidance.

(7) The audience for the Handbook was wide and would include:-

- Highway and transportation engineers.
- Developers, architects, planners, urban designers and surveyors.
- Local planning authorities, elected members of local and parish councils, environmental organisations and local heritage groups.
- Public utilities, telecommunication providers, local businesses, farmers, landowners and farm contractors.

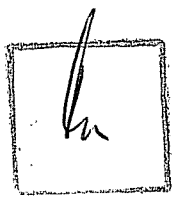
(8) The objectives of the Handbook were:-

- To identify the special characteristics and features of the rural roads network that contributed to the distinctive character and quality of the AONB.
- To provide high quality detailed guidance for consideration in the development of new highway treatments and improvements.
- To ensure the conservation and maintenance of the key characteristics and features.
- To raise awareness and understanding of the importance of the rural roads network, including its historic/heritage, landscape and biodiversity importance.
- To do so in a way which increased safety and was practical and cost effective.

(9) The Handbook would draw on best practice examples of similar work from across the UK and Europe. Case studies from the Kent Downs were being developed for the Handbook. Two consultation workshops had already been held for local authority officers, highways engineers, parish councils and other stakeholders. We had also met twice with KCC Highways Engineers and the Kent police.

(10) Comments from initial consultations with the police, highways engineers and this board would be included in the Design Handbook before it was released as a consultation draft (Jan 2007).

(11) Subject to wider consultation, the Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that the Kent Downs AONB Highways Design Handbook be approved and adopted as policy in summer 2007.



8. Prewet Salting for Kent

(Item 10 – Report by Director, Kent Highway Services)

(1) Prewet was the name given to the process developed in Europe, and used Worldwide, for introducing brine solution to solid salt for precautionary Winter Service activities. The paper described the prewet process, where prewetting was used and the benefits and cost of using Prewet for precautionary Winter Service. The opportunity to commence the use of prewet in Kent was very timely due to the KHS accommodation project, which would result in new facilities from 2007 with a long life expectancy and the introduction of new winter service fleet of vehicles for winter 2006-07.

(2) Prewet required brine-saturating facilities for the brine solution in each depot. The winter service spreader fleet required the addition of side tank, pump and control systems for prewet. These were ideally fitted during the construction of the vehicles, although these could be fitted retrospectively to the existing spreader fleet, if they were modern units with suitable computer spreader control systems.

(3) The vehicle operated the route in a similar manner to a conventional spreader although road speed during treatment could be at slightly higher speeds than the typical 38mph, to speeds of 50mph, where conditions permitted. The solid, dry salt was brought to the spinner, but as the salt reached the chute to the spinner, or in the spinner itself, a solution of brine was sprayed to coat the solid salt.

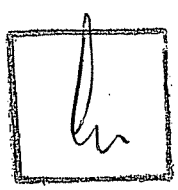
(4) The solution improved the trajectory of the salt and more actively adhered to the road surface. This had been proven to reduce secondary bounce and scatter of spread materials improving performance on the carriageway and reducing environmental effects on soft verges. There was also a longer-term reduction in the quantity of salt used due to the accuracy of application and the increased residual presence of the salt.

(5) Typical salt spreading rates would be reduced by up to approximately 25% using prewet salt as opposed to traditional solid salt. The proposal for Kent would be to use 6mm rocksalt for the dry salt element of the prewet process. This would result in financial savings compared to using the 3mm pure salt.

(6) Europe and North America had used the system for many years with the majority of countries adopting the technique. Back in the late 1990's and early 2000's the system was adopted by a number of Local Authorities in England and following various successful trials prewet had now started to become more prevalent on the road network in England, Scotland and Wales.

(7) The adoption of prewet and the ultimate creation of the new depots would require the re-optimisation of the Network. This could lead to the reduction of the number of spreading vehicles required, which in turn would lead to a reduction of crews required to carry out the treatment. This would have no effect on the number of qualified drivers maintained within the Alliance, but would permit longer periods between winter service shifts. The operation of the vehicle was no different to that of a dry salting technique. However, a short induction in the use of the saturator and brine storage unit would be required for staff.

(8) The principal risk with the adoption of prewet would be the acceptance of those responsible for instructing and undertaking the treatment of the lower salting rates required. The custom to apply excess amounts of salt to ensure that the appropriate coverage was achieved across the full width of carriageway would need to be challenged. There would be reduced risk in the following areas:-



- Reduction in third party insurance claims. Vehicles fitted with GPS would provide robust information on when, how and where treatment was undertaken
- Reduction in environmental risk due to lower salt usage and lower stock requirement
- Potential efficiency gains

(9) The principal benefits were improved Winter Service performance through: -

- Materials more readily adhere to the carriageway
- More effective spread pattern to the carriageway
- Reduced verge environmental effects
- Reduced salt usage without performance reduction due to reduced spread rate
- Elongated active window of retained solution on the carriageway
- Increased application speeds introducing increased route lengths and route optimisation
- Prewetted materials begin going in to solution immediately
- Potential reduction in third party insurance claims from the reduction of secondary bounce
- Reduced salt storage capacity in Depots

(10) GPS, satellite navigation and route planning could be combined to guide the driver through the route and plot the vehicle movement and the treatment of all routes. Systems were currently available that would allow the central control of the spreading vehicle settings, linked to the forecast and thermal mapping. This would result in the driver of the spreader to be simply responsible for following the route, with any changes to the rate of spread of material being sent to the vehicle by GPS.

(11) The following capital expenditure would be required:-

- A saturator, pure salt store and storage tank was required in each depot. Estimated cost of £23k per depot
- Spreader increased specification at £2.8k per spreader

(12) Other associated costs:-

- The salt required to produce the brine had to be free from impurities, in order that the filters on the saturator were not damaged.
- Additional cost of pure salt over 6mm rock salt. Estimated cost of £15 per tonne.

(13) The report detailed the comparison in the cost of salt, based on a typical winter similar to the 2005/06 season, where 20,000 tonnes was used. In addition to the environmental savings there were potential financial savings. The decrease in the amount of salt used in any season offered the opportunity to reduce the size of salt barn in each depot. Estimated cost savings of £24,000. The optimisation of routes and the increased length and treatment speed capability with the lower rate of spread might result in a reduction in the number of spreading vehicles required. Estimated cost savings of £12,500 per spreader per year. For a reduction of every spreader, there would also be a saving in the operation of the vehicle. The cost was built up from standby and shift

payments. Estimated cost savings of £5,000 per operative per year. The filtering of grey water from the wash down areas would reduce the quantity of clean water required. Estimated cost savings of £1,500 per year.

(14) A summary of the estimated savings expected to be achieved was set out in the report. Savings would also be realised beyond the term of the new contract. *i.e beyond 2016.*

(15) The Board supported the proposal for recommendation to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that approval be given to implement the use of the prewet de-icing technique in Kent following the establishment of the new depots.

The Chairman informed the Board that, due to the Members' visit to the Traffic Management Centre following the meeting, he had decided to defer Items 9, 11 and 12 to the Board's next meeting in January.

06/exe/hab/111406/Minutes

Chairman .....

Date 9th January 2007

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Kent Highway Services – A 21st Century Service

A report by the Director, Kent Highways Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 9th January 2007.

Introduction

1. On 4 December 2006 the final version of the Paper 'Kent Highway Services - A 21st Century Service' was approved unanimously by Cabinet and fully endorsed by Paul Carter and Peter Gilroy. The paper described why it is desirable for Kent Highway Services to operate from two divisions rather than three.

2. This optimisation of accommodation will free up capital funding to reinvest in the service, to fund new technology to drive efficiencies, reduce annual overhead costs and improve customer satisfaction. This paper gives more detail of a technology enabled service.

The Current Situation

3. All local authorities are being placed under increasing pressure, including financial scrutiny, to make the best use of available resources in delivering their services to the public. A well-managed highway network is a core component of these services and the highway asset is probably the most valuable asset that many local authorities maintain.

4. KCC only knows in general terms the size and condition of the highway asset since the asset registers were prepared back in the 1980's and 1990's and very little updating has taken place since. At best KCC can only suggest investment levels necessary to maintain the asset and offset depreciation. There is an absence of co-ordinated forward works programmes that could save costs and minimise disruption to the travelling public.

5. The asset records are held in disparate databases that rely on manual input. It is not currently possible to fully record inspection regimes and maintenance operations and therefore the Council is exposed to risks, including corporate manslaughter charges.

6. There is a varying degree of sophistication with the use of technology across the KHS Alliance partners. Ringway and Jacobs maintain quality business management systems and have invested in document management. TSUK make use of innovative technology in intelligent traffic systems. In KCC the business procedures are not consistent, the technology is not integrated and therefore none of the systems talk to each other. Staff are deprived of the basic tools to deliver a 21st Century Service with a significant impact on efficiency.

What KHS wants to do differently?

7. The vision is to create systems that all the Alliance want to use because they are easy to navigate, bring efficiencies and add value to our service. The systems will have the following attributes:-

    - One shared Alliance system with single entry point to current, accurate information updated in real time.
    - A system that informs the public and others, manages expectations and improves the reputation of KHS.

- A system that is valued by staff and supports them in delivering a high quality service, supports the culture and drives innovation, improvement and efficiency
- Delivery of measurable benefits through self auditing performance measurement
- Clear accountability for workflow, information, budget management and allows us to meet all our legislative obligations.

8. Technology requirements can be split into two clearly defined work streams:

9. **Network Management tools** designed to give a single point data source that meets the Alliance business needs

    - It will be an integrated database containing all of our asset information, inspection and survey results, works programmes, and other records held globally against the road network. The data will be stored centrally with robust system architecture but which can be maintained by remote specialist teams.
    - It will consist of a single set of core data that will instantaneously update all relevant datasets using wherever practical mobile technology, supporting all parts of the service from the Contact Centre to the Divisional and other Alliance offices.
    - The core business processes will be standardised to ensure efficiencies but specialisms will also be available, such as Roadworks, Street Lighting, Arboriculture and Highways maintenance applications.
    - There will be end to end work flow management. This will ensure that defects reported to the contact centre will automatically initiate a response by an inspector or maintenance team to minimise the report to fix times. Mobile technology will provide accurate feedback information.
    - There will be links to inform the public where our works are planned and we will be able to co-ordinate these works with the utilities. These links will include real time information from the Kent Traffic Management Centre to help us plan the efficient operation of the highway network.
    - The system will automatically raise works orders, capture actual costs and provide reports to Corporate Finance. It will also have the ability to provide personally tailored performance indicators to KHS users.

10. **Business Management tools** will ensure that the day to day business can be operated effectively, efficiently and consistently with the minimum number of touch points in any delivery process. Required actions will be notified automatically and progress monitored and reported.

11. The processes will ensure compliance with Alliance Contracts, Legal requirements, Health and Safety, Recruitment, Training and Employment policies. They will assist with Performance Management and Risk Assessment.

12. New technology will allow knowledge and Best Practice to be disseminated across the Alliance and will include:-

    - Policies Procedures and Guidance notes
    - Corporate Information and branding
    - Technical Indices

- Human Resource Information
- Document Management
- Communications and information cascades.

13. An essential ingredient in raising overall performance levels will be the adoption, wherever appropriate, of common systems and standards across the Alliance. This will be achieved by designing the relevant elements of our systems to meet the nationally recognised standards in the fields of Quality, Environment and Health and Safety (i.e. ISO 9001,14001,18001). The procedures and processes of all parties will be built into an overarching system certified by an external accreditation body. A fully disciplined approach to applying these systems will lead to more consistency, less waste, less duplication, better use of resources and overall cost savings.

14. It will be the 'single source of truth' for all necessary management information to enable the Alliance Board to monitor and improve performance of the Alliance in managing our highway asset.

What benefits will a technology enable service bring?

15. KHS are confident that the benefits will be:

- Faster response to, and resolution of, fault reports.
- 25% reduction in calls to the Contact Centre by increasing customer access to information and fault reporting through the KCC website and by cutting the number of repeat calls.
- A reduction in incidents which lead to insurance claims by between 5 and 10% through improved maintenance management.
- Streamlined processes enabled by technology from start to finish, integrating client, consultant and contractor leading to a 10 to 15% saving in staff time across the KHS Alliance.
- Reduction in administration through an integrated business and asset management system releasing staff time to focus on improving customer satisfaction.
- Increased staff motivation, better career prospects, greater job satisfaction and flexibility, and a workforce plan that is sustainable against the challenges of an ageing workforce and industry competition.

16. KHS has been reviewing how it delivers all operational aspects and the conclusion to this work is due early in 2007. KHS must take the output from this review and implement it. But only with a significant investment in technology will KHS be able to deliver the service that stakeholders and the public want, and that staff are proud to provide.

Accountable Officer: Geoff Harrison-Mee: 01622 694192
Background Documents: None

Appendix 1

What the Kent Highway Services Intranet could look like

Kent Highway Services – our response times to requests for service

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 9th January 2006

Introduction

1. The Kent Highway Services Contact Centre was launched in April 2005 and at this time handled 5,000 calls per month from the single 08458 247 800 telephone number. The Contact Centre now handle over 16,000 highway enquiries per month with around half of these resulting in service requests passed to the Divisional Offices for action.

2. Since July 2006 and the start of the new contracts a new range of leaflets and around 180 KHS logo'd vehicles has raised the profile of the KHS brand along with the telephone number and email address.

3. The next step to help improve public satisfaction is to provide better information on the response times that people who contact KHS can expect from the highway service. This will help to manage expectations about how long a repair will take or a letter to be answered.

4. A key part of the Transformation process is to drive efficiency and improve service delivery but within the context of a core set of published response times.

5. A leaflet has now been produced that sets out the response times and this will be formally launched in January 2007. A session was held with over 120 front facing staff in December to launch the standards and provide customer care training. Copies of the new leaflet are on display.

Examples of response times and current performance

6. The table below sets out some examples of response times and levels of current performance;

	Examples of published response time	Current performance to target
1.	Response to letters in 10 working days	58% answered
2.	Dangerous emergency incidents attended to within 2½ hours	98% completed
3.	Streetlight repairs carried out within 7 working days	average currently 11 days (but some that require EDF power supply take up to 70 days)
4.	Hazardous defects attended within 5 working days	95% completed
5.	Urgent traffic signal faults fixed within 4 hours	97% completed

7. Publication of these response times gives clear guidance to KHS staff on the level of service they need to deliver. It also provides those who use our service with information to manage their expectations of the service they will receive. The Transformation process will be identifying different, improved and more efficient ways to deliver service to meet these response times.

8. A report presenting the results of the performance indicators listed in the table above and a range of other key results is reported to the Alliance Board each month. A copy of the December 2006 report is available on display.

Conclusion

9. Members are asked to;

- note the progress being made in Kent Highway Services
- support the response times and help promote these within the community.

Contact Officers: Caroline Bruce 01622 694192
David Thomas 01622 696863

Circular Roads 1/2006 Setting Local Speed Limits, Update

A report by the County Transportation Manager to the Highways Advisory Board on 9th January 2007

Introduction

1. At the September 2006 meeting of this Board, Members considered a report on the implications for Kent arising from the DfT's Circular Roads 1/2006 on the Setting of Local Speed Limits. This report sets out early progress and indications of time scales.

Working Group

2. An internal working group has been established to set the agenda for meeting the Government's requirement to review speed limits on all A and B class roads by 2011. The group, which contains a mix of KHS staff, including Jacobs as our partner, will be undertaking a significant proportion of the work.

Demonstration area

3. A demonstration area has now been selected so that problems and pitfalls can be identified before the work is undertaken Countywide. A plan of the demonstration area is shown in Appendix 1. This is an area south of Maidstone that includes a number of A class roads around the periphery with several B class roads running through it. There are also a number of villages contained within the area. Speed checks will be undertaken and consideration will be given to the likely physical measures that may be required. There will be a significant amount of consultation and preparation of traffic orders to be undertaken. I envisage that Jacobs will be commissioned to undertake a good proportion of this work.

4. An outline scheme with full estimates of cost will be reported to Members next year with the intention of funding speed limit changes and associated measures in the demonstration area in 2008/09. It should be noted that this scheme will only consider A and B class roads. The experience gained from this exercise will help to develop the full programme enabling all A and B class roads to be reviewed and the required changes implemented by the Government's deadline of 2011.

Financial Implications

5. The pilot study work is likely to cost in the region of £100,000 and will be funded from the Integrated Transport pot in 2007/08. The work should be completed by March 2008.

Exceptional sites

6. Where a high crash record is identified on a C or unclassified road, it may be necessary to implement a lower speed limit with or without physical measures. This will be covered by a crash remedial scheme which can be included with A and B road schemes in the local transport plan budget or funded separately as appropriate following a detailed report on that site and its associated issues.

Conclusion

6. Members are asked to note the early progress made on implementing local speed limits.

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KHS Tour de France 2007

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 9th January 2007

Introduction

1. This report outlines the latest position on delivering the Grand Départ for Tour de France 2007.

Background

2. The Tour de France is the premier event in the world cycling calendar. It is the most popular annual spectator event in the sporting world. The race is organised by the Amaury Sports Organisation (ASO). However the location, route and facilities are provided by the host city.

3. In August 2003 Transport for London (TfL) submitted a proposal on behalf of the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, to host the start of the Tour de France 2007 in London. The start, Grand Départ, includes an opening ceremony, prologue time trial and Stage 1 of the Tour.

4. TfL approached Kent County Council to facilitate Stage 1 of the Tour. A letter of understanding was signed on 3 August 2005 highlighting KCC's commitment to the Tour and briefly outlining the expected responsibilities and outputs.

5. TfL signed contracts with the ASO on 9 February 2006 at a press launch held at the Excel Centre, London. Kent signed a contract with TfL on 6 April 2006 to be a key stakeholder and facilitate hosting Stage 1 of the Tour.

6. The Tour is expected to generate approximately £16million for Kent's economy. However, this is considered to be a conservative estimate and is likely to be higher. In addition up to 3million spectators are expected to travel to Kent to enjoy the event.

Event Details

7. TfL's bid is to host the following:
   - Opening Ceremony – Trafalgar Square on the evening of Friday 6 July 2007. This ceremony presents the riders and their teams to the public.
   - Prologue Time Trial – 7.9km course around central London during the daytime of Saturday 7 July 2007. This is a short individual time trial which establishes who will be wearing the leader's yellow jersey on Stage 1.
   - Stage 1 – 209km race route through London's and Kent's roads during the daytime of Sunday 8 July 2007.

8. KCC are required to provide the following:
   - Allow the use of the highway for the race riders and to provide a route that meets with ASO approval.
   - Provide traffic management of the route including publication of road closures and the provision of public information.
   - Ensure planned works do not conflict with the event.
   - Provide appropriate barriers, cones, and signage for technical and safety reasons for the race riders and spectators.

- Ensure the road surface is clean, free from damage and obstacles or obstructions. This may require repair work where necessary.
- Grant licences or permissions required for the event and supporting events.
- Carry out all post-event cleaning and restorative works.

KHS Delivery

9. The cost of staging the Tour de France on the Kent Highway network is estimated at £400,000. This will be funded through sponsorship from, for example, Transport for London, District Councils and SEEDA.

10. To ensure successful delivery of the event, KHS has developed a structure that sits within the overall KCC structure. The KHS organisational chart is shown in Appendix A. TfL have contracted Innovision, Event Management Company, to deliver all aspects of the Tour in the Greater London area and ensure that partners outside of this area deliver the outputs they have been contracted to provide.

11. KCC have identified the major risks by holding such a prestigious event in Kent. This can be seen in Appendix B – TdF Business Risks.

12. Amanda Lumley was appointed in August 2006 as KCC's Tour de France Project Manager. Amanda is responsible for co-ordinating the event for KCC.

13. Key priorities have been identified to create a cycling legacy for Kent which include:
    - Communication of the race and its route to key stakeholders ready for the major press launch on 26 October 2006 in Paris.
    - Co-ordination of events for a promotional campaign running for 2007, 'Year of the Cycle'.

14. KHS have been working with public transport partners to encourage spectators to travel by public transport wherever possible over the weekend of 6, 7 & 8 July 2007 and facilitate managing traffic volume and movement on the highway network. Ideas that have been discussed include combined ticketing, car share, park and ride etc.

15. KHS have identified a route through the county that will require a minimum amount of work to ensure it meets the ASO requirements for the road race. Stage One will start in central London and enter Kent at Dartford, proceeding through Gravesham, Medway, Maidstone, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford before reaching the Stage Finish in Canterbury. The ASO have inspected the route in mid October 2006 ready for the major press launch in Paris.

16. Stakeholder meetings have been co-ordinated between KHS, Emergency Services, Emergency Planning Officers, Public Transport Operators, Medway Council, TfL, Districts and Borough Councils and KCC Officers. At these meetings timely distribution of information to stakeholders, businesses and residents has been highlighted as a key to ensuring the race has minimum impact to the day-to-day lives in Kent, management of people and traffic movement in a safe and effective manner.

Conclusion

17. The success of this event represents an opportunity to show Kent as an international stage for World-class sporting events. This event will demonstrate on the world stage the ability of Kent to host complex international sporting events and demonstrate our capacity for hosting Olympic events and training camps.

9. The Tour will also create a legacy to generate a long-term increase in interest and participation in cycling for sport and for recreation and transport.

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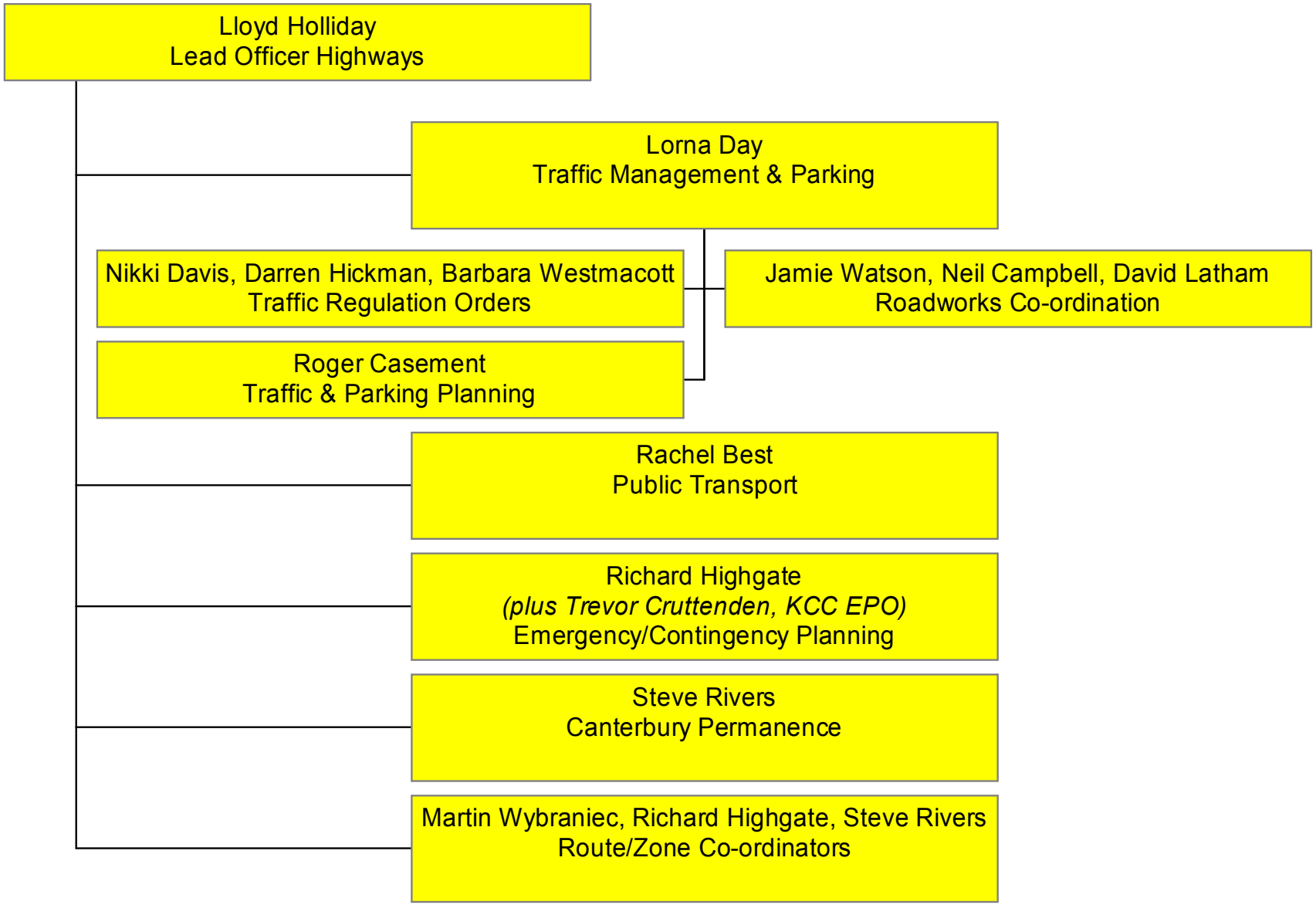
APPENDIX A TdF HIGHWAYS STRUCTURE



APPENDIX B **TdF BUSINESS RISKS**

Likelihood

Score - 1 Highly Unlikely	Score - 2 Unlikely	Score - 3 Possible	Score - 4 Very Likely	Score - 5 Definite
Previous experience at this and other similar organisations makes this outcome highly unlikely to occur.	Previous experience discounts this risk as being unlikely to occur but other organisations have experience problems in this area.	The council has in past experienced problems in this area but not in last three years.	The council has experienced problems in this area in the last three years.	The council is experiencing problems in this area or expects to in the next 12 months.
There are effective, tested and verifiable controls in place that prevent occurrence of this risk.	There are controls in placed that whilst not tested appear to be effective.	Some controls are in place and generally work but there have been occasions when they have failed and problems have arisen.	Controls may be in place but are generally ignored or ineffective.	No controls are in place.

Impact

Score - 1 Negligible	Score - 2 Low	Score - 3 Medium	Score - 4 High	Score - 5 Very High
Little or no financial impact (less than £5,000).	The financial impact would be losses or loss income of no greater than £25,000.	The financial impact would result be losses or loss income of no greater than £100,000.	The financial impact would result be losses or loss income of no greater than £500,000.	The financial impact would be greater than £500,000.
Council services are not disrupted.	Some temporary disruption to the activities of one council service but not beyond this.	Regular disruption to the the activities for one or more council service.	Severe service disruption on a departmental level or regular disruption affecting more than one department.	Severe disruption to the activities of all council departments.

APPENDIX B

TdF BUSINESS RISKS

No impact on the delivery of the council's corporate objectives.	It may cost more or there may be delay in delivery one of the council's corporate objectives.	A number of corporate objectives would be delayed or not delivered.	Many corporate objectives delayed or not delivered.	Unable to deliver most objectives.
No loss of confidence and trust in the council.	Some loss of confidence and trust in the council felt by a certain group or within a small geographical area.	A general loss of confidence and trust in the council within the local community.	A major loss of confidence and trust in the council within the local community.	A disastrous loss of confidence and trust in the council both locally and nationally.

If potential financial losses or lost income fall between two scores use halves e.g 3.5.

Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 9th January 2007

Introduction

1. Public perception of Highway Authorities' control over roadworks is generally predicated on a lack of influence around poor workmanship and traffic delays.

2. This report outlines the latest on the proposal to introduce a Considerate Contractor Scheme into Kent and for the approval to proceed with launching such a scheme which will encourage a higher standard of works and safety consistently across Kent's roads.

Background

3. Corporation of London started up the original Considerate Contractor Scheme in 1987.

4. Considerate Contractor Schemes are now recognised by the construction industry. There is also a degree of public recognition and with the introduction of more schemes around the country this is bound to grow and become a national initiative.

5. Equally important is the approval and support being given by the Tidy Britain Group and the Health and Safety Executive. Both organisations realise that these schemes are a significant step towards furthering broader environmental, health and safety objectives.

The Philosophy

6. The aim of the scheme is to introduce a reward system for high performing contractors who consider all highway users during the works. Through offering coveted Awards based on the condition of the interface between construction sites and the public, the Scheme induces a spirit of pride and excellence in the workforce.

7. The scheme is also designed to flag up those contractors who are not performing adequately. This will give KCC a better opportunity to monitor performances for all contractors signed into the scheme and deal with them promptly to improve standards.

8. The scheme will be a development and improvement from the current Highways Authority & Utilities Committee (HAUC) Joint Site Safety surveys and the Kent Highway Services (KHS) Divisional site safety checks.

9. There will probably be willingness by Utilities and a contractor to be a member of this scheme, as to opt out almost shows a "don't care attitude". The winning of a high achievement award can be displayed on company vehicles (sticker) and jealously guarded and fought for the following year.

Kent and Medway Objectives

10. The Kent and Medway Considerate Contractor Scheme aims to encourage all contractors working on the highway to carry out their operations in a safe, consistent and considerate manner by;
    - Fostering a joint initiative to demonstrate the spirit of co-operation,
    - Improving Standards,
    - Ensuring that anyone coming along the highway from any direction will understand exactly what is happening and what is expected of them,

- Give constructive feedback and praise to develop continuous improvement.

How these will be measured

11. The scheme comprises of a Code of Good Practice, which includes the requirements of "Safety at Street Works and Road Works", using four categories; Safe, Clean, Considerate and Co-operative. Sites are judged against a checklist that takes into account safety, cleanliness, considerate behaviours, co-operation and environmental considerations.

12. It is by following the code of practice that the standards of works will be raised, rates of progress maximised and the condition of the highway will be improved.

Public Participation

13. Members of the public passing works on the highway are invited to comment on the conditions of the site using the Kent Contact Centre. Callers will point out infringements of the Code, but are also encouraged to provide any constructive feedback.

Staffing

14. The successful operation of this scheme relies upon sufficient site inspections being made. Senior representatives from each of the participating bodies as detailed below will undertake inspections:
    - Site safety surveys (HAUC) – 84 sites inspected per year
    - JUG (4 reps from SU's) - 48 sites inspected per year
    - Kent & Medway Divisional Offices - 150 sites inspected per year
    - Ringway and Jacobs - 48 sites inspected per year

15. A working party will be set up to manage most aspects of the scheme. This includes site inspection, records, award recommendations, correspondence, outline responses, site counselling and co-ordinating public relations activities.

Site Inspections and Records

16. Accurate written site records are essential, as these provide the basis for Awards judgements. Also photographic evidence is essential, especially in the case of sites which fail to meet the correct standards and examples of exemplary practice for the awards ceremony and publicity.

The Awards

17. All sites are judged according to the standards set out in the Code of Good Practice. There are three categories of award:
    - **Gold Award** - Organisations which show a consistent and high degree of compliance with the requirements of the Code of Good Practice.
    - **Considerate Contractor -** Organisations which regularly meet the requirements of the Code of Good Practice.
    - **Individual Awards -** Companies or operatives that have excelled. This category could also be contractor and gang of the year if merited.

Judging

18. An adjudicating panel of representatives will be appointed. The panel will include independent members from outside the industry. The panel allocates awards on the basis of this evidence provided by the working party.

Managing the scheme

19. The scheme will be run as cost neutral. An annual joining fee will be charged to the contractor/utility companies. This is to cover the cost of the awards ceremony, the initial supply of information and regalia, and the in-house resources to run the scheme. However there will be a minimal amount of set up staff time which will be recovered from the scheme.

20. We are already carrying out enough site surveys to give meaningful results and we have an existing collation system. Also the Joint Utilities Group (JUG) representatives and Highways Authority & Utilities Committee (HAUC) representatives will also contribute towards the management of the scheme.

21. Medway Unitary Authority has historically had close links with KCC and discussions are taking place to finalise Medway's involvement with the scheme. Should Medway decide not to join then the scheme will only need to be re-branded prior to the launch.

Public Launch

22. The proposal is to launch a Considerate Contractor Scheme in Kent at the start of 2007. This should be a high profile launch with a media representation. KCC will benefit publicly for launching such a scheme and we stand to improve public perception of works on our highway and gain safer and cleaner streets as a result

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The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) – An Update

A report by the Director, Kent Highway Services, to the Highways Advisory Board on 9th January 2007

Introduction

1. This report provides an update on the progress of the Traffic Management Act (TMA) which gained Royal Assent in 2004 and the accompanying Intervention Criteria which may be used by the Secretary of State and the Department for Transport should a local authority be seen to be failing in its duties under the TMA. A summary of the key issues set out in the TMA are detailed below. A fuller summary can be seen in Appendix 1 to this report.

Summary of main report

2. The following list is a summary of the main report highlighting the key areas to be aware of:
   - The TMA requires that the whole local authority, not just the highways department, to be aware of and take account of the implications of the duty.
   - The Network Management Plan will be reviewed and reported upon every year in line with the reporting process for the LTP.
   - If an authority fails to perform its network management duty, then the Act provides for the Secretary of State and the DfT to intervene and appoint a "Traffic Director".
   - Permit Schemes are designed to give LA's further control over works on the highway.
   - Permit Schemes will be designed to run as 'cost neutral'. Estimated figures indicate that income from a Permit Scheme may run to £2 million per annum
   - Non-refundable cost of managing KHS works through a Permit Scheme will be in the region of £850k per annum.
   - The DfT will give LA's a six-month period to establish the permit process.
   - KCC do have an option of concentrating on EtoN noticing to improve works co-ordination rather than adopting a Permit Scheme.
   - The introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) will bring financial penalties to works promoters for incorrect information that adversely affects roadworks co-ordination.
   - The FPN's will also be applied to local authority roadworks. These penalties will be recorded against performance indicators and will not be a financial restraint.
   - DfT has completed its consultations for the FPN scheme and has indicated that the regulations are expected to come into force during mid - late 2007.
   - The Act requires local authorities to commence the noticing of their own roadworks. This will increase notices by 40% to over 70,000 per annum.
   - Estimated that KHS will require 12 roadwork co-ordinators to manage these notices to ensure the scheme operates to its full potential.
   - It may be possible to improve the processing of notices by investing in technology such as hand held equipment for the Highway Inspectors.
   - DfT has indicated that guidelines for a FPN offence will not be issued and have indicated that legal procedures could be through Magistrates Courts.

Financial Implications

3. It is estimated that 5% of notices may attract an FPN. With effective management, an annual income of £640,000 could be achieved.

4. The cost of a Permit Scheme for Kent, estimated at £2.83m, will be self-funding. It may be necessary, however, to "pump prime" start-up costs which will be recoverable once the scheme is operational.

Conclusions

5. Until the Regulations pertaining to Permit Schemes and Fixed Penalty Notices have been placed before Parliament, it is not possible to provide exact budget figures. However, from consultation documents released by the DfT and examination of our current procedures, it will be necessary to provide both budget and staff resources if KCC wish to run a Permit Scheme.

6. The introduction of FPN's which are likely to come into force in Mid-late 2007 will also require investment in staff resources. Without this investment, KCC will fail in their Network Management Duties and may face the prospect of Intervention procedures by the Secretary of State and the DfT. Although an income stream will become available to balance out these requirements it is likely that both the workload and the income will be higher within the first year of operation.

7. Monitoring systems and procedures along with close communication and liaison links must be established with the local District/Borough Authorities in order that close supervision can be carried out with regard to their Civil Enforcement operations. This will be essential to prevent KCC being affected with regard to the TMA 2004 and the associated Network Management Duties.

8. Members are asked to consider the preliminary conclusions and offer their views in order to prepare for the release of the regulations relating to the TMA and the associated Network Management Duties.

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Appendix 1

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA)

Background

1. The Traffic Management Act gained Royal Assent in July 2004 with the aim of 'tackling congestion and reducing disruption' on the road network. The Act contains 7 parts:

   - **Part 1 - Traffic Officers**
     - Part 1 empowers the Secretary of State for Transport, in his capacity as highway authority for Motorways and Trunk Roads to establish an uniformed on road traffic officer service to manage the traffic consequences of random incidents (such as crashes, obstructions, debris and breakdowns). They are also required to manage programmed highway events such as the passage of abnormal loads. The Act provides for the traffic officers to have the powers to stop and direct traffic and to place traffic signs to keep traffic moving.
   - **Part 2 - Network Management Duty by local traffic authorities**
     - Part 2 imposes a duty on all local authorities to secure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements for planning and carrying out the actions to be taken in performing the duty. If an authority fails to perform its network management duty, then the Act provides for the Department for Transport (DfT) to intervene and appoint a "Traffic Director" in relation to that authority.
   - **Part 3 - Permit Schemes**
     - Part 3 provides for the introduction of a permit scheme. A permit scheme would control specific works in the street in a particular area and would require a permit to be obtained for such works. This would apply to roadworks and streetworks.
   - **Part 4 - Streetworks**
     - Part 4 provides for the change to the regulatory regime for utility companies' street works. The Act also provides for the increase in levels of fines of specific offences, and provides for highway authorities to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for certain offences.
   - **Part 5 – Highways and Roads**
     - Part 5 only applies to London. It includes the specific measures that alter the arrangements for traffic management in London. These include provisions for the Secretary of State to designate an initial network of strategic roads.
   - **Part 6 - Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions**
     - Part 6 includes powers providing a single framework to make regulations for the civil enforcement by local authorities of parking and waiting restrictions, bus lanes and some moving traffic offences (yellow box junctions and banned turns) including the use of camera evidence.
   - **Part 7 - Miscellaneous and General**
     - Part 7 contains general provisions, including those relating to Blue Badges, for the application of surplus income from parking places, and financial provisions for the establishment of traffic offices.

2. The TMA requires that the whole local authority, not just the highways department, be aware of and take account of the implications of the duty and that the Traffic Manager liaises and co-ordinates with every department within that local authority.

Progress to date

3. **Part 1 - The Introduction of Highways Agency Traffic Officers (HATO's)**
   Part 1 of the Act has already come into force. The Highways Agency has introduced Traffic Officers across the country on the Motorway Network. They are employed to assist the traffic police and motorists with incidents on the Motorway Network. Traffic Officers have been active in the Southeast of England since August 2005.

4. **Part 2 - The Network Management Duty**
   Part 2 of the Act came into force in January 2005. Under this part the Act requires all local traffic authorities to appoint a Traffic Manager. Kent County Council (KCC) has had a Traffic Manager in post since 2004. The current Traffic Manager is Lloyd Holliday.

5. KCC published its Network Management Plan 2006-11 in July 2006 as a guidance framework to the Network Management Duty. This plan compliments the Local Transport Plan 2006-11 and is appended under Annex 1. The Network Management Plan will be reviewed and reported upon every year in line with the reporting process for the LTP.

6. The formal consultation documents for the Intervention criteria, which give the DfT the powers to intervene in a failing authority, have also been returned with these powers expected to come into force early in 2007.

7. **Part 3 - Permit Schemes**
   Permit Schemes are designed to give the local authority further control over all works on the highway. It is intended that local authorities will have powers to direct all roadworks and streetworks with regard to where, when and how they may be carried out, ensuring greater co-ordination and control.

8. The DfT are currently consulting widely on the operation of a Permit Scheme. This consultation is due for return to DfT by 26th February 2007. The DfT have now indicated that the making of these regulations are estimated for mid 2007 with the estimated date of the regulations coming into force late in 2007. KCC has indicated that they wish to run a Permit Scheme.

9. The Permit Scheme will be designed to run at 'cost neutral' so any income received from the utility companies balances the cost of running the scheme for their work but not for our own highway works. KHS must submit permits for their own works in the same manor as the utility works. This is a requirement of the DfT and will have to be included in a Permit Scheme application for approval by the DfT.

10. Although we will have to increase resources to operate the permit scheme during the first year of operations, monies received from the utility companies will be in the order of £2 million per annum. However as some 40% of modifiable works will be our own highway works the non-refundable cost of permitting these will be in the order of £850,000 per annum. This figure will comprise initial staff cost, training and software outlay most of which may be recovered during the first year of operation. However, it is stressed that these figures can only be estimated at the current time, as regulations will dictate new requirements and procedures, which is not possible to place budget figures upon until they are released.

11. A percentage of this estimated cost is the expenditure to 'set up' the scheme with reference to staff resource, software and other set up fees and therefore will not be recovered until the process is fully established. The DfT has indicated that they will give authorities a six-month period to establish the permit process in order that staff may be recruited and trained. This will follow a short lead in period which will allow the software companies time to develop and install the necessary software requirements.

12. It is estimated that in order to run a permit scheme in Kent, a further 30+ members of staff of varying disciplines will be required spread throughout the KHS offices.

13. It must be stressed that the above is only an estimate and that we will be able to justify to the DfT that our permit fees should be charged at the maximum allowable and that all works on all types of roads will require a permit.

14. However, we do have the option to improve the control over works on the highway by developing a more disciplined approach to works informed by EToN noticing system.

15. **Part 4 - Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)**
    The introduction of FPN's will bring about a system of financial penalties, which can be issued to roadworks and streetworks promoters for failures in their systems that prevent full co-ordination of works on the highway. The process will also be applied to local authority roadworks, although these penalties will be recorded against performance indicators and will not be a financial restraint. The resulting performance records are expected to be transparent, showing complete parity and made fully available to the general public and utilities alike.

16. The DfT has completed their consultations for the FPN scheme and has indicated that the regulations are expected to come into force during mid - late 2007.

17. Currently, the roadworks co-ordination units process approximately 50,000 works notices per annum. Due to limitations of existing staff resources, it is impossible for the existing teams to monitor every notice leading to an inefficient service that does not fully embrace the possible income stream. The TMA requires that local authorities commence the noticing of their own roadworks as soon as possible and therefore the amount of works notices processed by KCC will increase by approximately 40% to over 70,000 works notices per annum. It is estimated that KHS will require 12 full time roadworks co-ordinators (1 per district area) to manage, scrutinise and co-ordinate these notices in order that the necessary Fixed Penalties may be applied and that the scheme operates to its full potential for the issue and collection of these fines.

18. A conservative estimate shows that approximately 5% of notices issued may attract a FPN and that if the scheme is managed precisely, with the correct number of staff resources in place a possible annual income can be calculated at around £640,000. Allowances should be made for the fact that following the initial peak in the issue of penalties, these may decrease, as the promoters become more aware of their duties.

19. It may be possible to improve the processing of notices by investing in technology such as hand held equipment for the Highway Inspectors. The use of this equipment will ensure that the service is run economically and efficiently.

20. The DfT has indicated that guidelines in relation to what will constitute a FPN offence will not be issued and have indicated that legal procedures through Magistrates Courts will decide offences. Therefore, KCC may become involved in test cases, within this procedure. It is hoped that close liaison with other organisations such as Kent Highway Authority & Utilities Committee (KHAUC) and SouthEast Highway Authority & Utilities Committee (SEHAUC) will reduce the use of the legal progress.

21. **Part 5 - Traffic Management in London**
    KCC does not participate in Part 5 of the Traffic Management Act

22. **Part 6 - Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contravention's**
    The DfT closed the consultation period for this part of the TMA in September 2006 and it is expected that the regulations will come into force Mid 2007.

23. The proposed changes are allied with the Civil Bus lane and moving traffic enforcement which propose to hand responsibility for some moving offences to the Parking Attendants who will become Civil Enforcement Officers.

24. The decriminalisation agreement that currently operates within Kent gives the powers of enforcement and control of the on street parking to the individual District/Borough Authorities. The duties performed by the District/Borough Authorities and their officers will form part of the measurement and reporting procedures required under the TMA. Therefore it is essential that close liaison and communication links are fully maintained with the local authorities and that stringent monitoring procedures are put into place to ensure that the KCC does not get penalised by the DfT for any inefficiencies in performance by the District/Borough Councils.

25. The proposed changes to the current system currently operated within the District/Borough Councils in Kent under a decriminalisation agreement are summarised as follows:

    - Authorities may be required to publish 'parking maps' for the general public, along with financial and statistical data.
    - Authorities may be required to regularly review their parking policies in consultation with stakeholders and publish this information for the general public.
    - Authorities may be required to introduce differential penalty charges dependent upon the location of the vehicle therefore issuing a more severe penalty for vehicles parked in areas where parking is permanently banned.
    - Civil Enforcement Officers may be given the discretion to decide when to issue a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).
    - PCN's may be issued by post - specifically those issued for moving offences, which may be captured by automated methods such as cameras.

26. **Part 7 - Miscellaneous Duties**
    Part 7 of the TMA is currently under discussion through various working parties and dates for the Regulations to come into force are yet to be released.

Revised Timetable for Implementation of the Traffic Management Act 2004 Regulations.

27. The table below shows the timescale for implementation of the Traffic Management Act regulations.

Wave 1			
	Estimated date for full public consultation	**Estimated date of laying /making regulations**	**Estimated date of regulations coming into force**
Guidance on Intervention Criteria	July - September 2006	Late 2006	Early 2007
Notices, Directions and Restrictions		Early 2007	Mid-late 2007
Fixed Penalty Notices		Early 2007	Mid-late 2007
Section 74 Over Staying Charges		Early 2007	Mid-late 2007
Permits	October - December 2006	Mid 2007	Late 2007
Civil Parking Enforcement	July - September 2006	From Early 2007	Mid 2007
Civil Bus lane and moving traffic enforcement	Early-mid 2007	From Late 2007	Early 2008
Inspection of Blue Badges		Mid 2006	Mid-late 2006

Wave 2	
	Working Group commences
Inspections	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group
Training and Accreditation	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group
Diversionary Works	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group
Records	*Late 2007 (TBC)*
Highways Act FPNs and Overstaying Charges	*Late 2007(TBC)*

Wave 3	
	Working Group commences
Resurfacing	TBA
Safety Code	TBA
Qualifications	TBA
Reinstatement Specification	Ongoing HAUC(UK) Working Group

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A2 Pepperhill to Cobham Widening Scheme
A2/A282 Improvement Scheme & M25 J1b to 3 Widening

A report by the County Engineer to the Highways Advisory Board on 9 January 2007

Introduction

1. Widening of the A2 trunk road between Pepperhill and Cobham from 3 to 4 lanes in each direction was reported to the meeting of this Board in July last year. This report gives an update on the progress of the works, the works programme and ongoing consultations between SKANSKA (the consortium delivering the project for the Highways Agency), and County and Gravesham Borough Council officers. A diagrammatic version of the scheme is shown at the end of this report.

2. Improvements to the A2/A282 junction are also underway and this report outlines the programme and discussions between the contractor Costains and County officers. A diagrammatic version of the scheme is shown at the end of this report.

3. Both the schemes started in September with off-line works, the A2 Pepperhill to Cobham scheme's being at Tollgate and Pepperhill. Downs Road was closed to the public and will remain closed for the duration of the works. The Tollgate Hotel, which is significantly effected by the widening works, was acquired by the Highways Agency and is being used as a site office and public information centre.

4. The start of works ceremony for both schemes was on 10th November held at the former Tollgate Hotel, being carried out by Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, Minister of State for Transport, who started the bored piling machine for the foundations of the new Tollgate bridge. The day was also the first of two of a public exhibition of both schemes at the former Tollgate Hotel.

5. Regular liaison meetings have been set up for both schemes between the contractors and KHS, including fortnightly co-ordination meetings for the A2 Pepperhill to Cobham scheme, and for the A2/A282 scheme overview group meetings every 2 months; the group consisting of representatives from KCC DBC GBC and HA.

6. The M25 Junction 1B to 3 improvement scheme is currently undergoing public consultation following an exhibition held over 7th 8th & 9th December.

A2 Pepperhill to Cobham Widening

7. Details of imminent works, including lane closures, are given on the HA's web site www.highways.gov.uk/A2beancobhamphase2 The SKANSKA public relations officer is Gordon Hounslow who can be contacted on 07831 196325. The works programme is currently as follows:

   (i) 15th January commence construction of additional vehicle crossovers, through central reservation, on A2. This will require traffic management measures with narrow lanes operating between Marling Cross and Thong lane for 8 months.
   (ii) In May commence work around Pepperhill Junction, requiring traffic management measures lasting approximately 12 weeks.
   (iii) Mid May closure of Marling Cross over bridge, followed by closure of Hever Court Road. Both closures being for up to 14 months, required to enable statutory undertakers' diversions and construction of the new bridge over A2, new roundabouts and link roads.

(iv) April 2008 commencement of 7 further phases of traffic management on the Pepperhill section to enable tying in of new road.
(v) Dec 2008 traffic will be moved over to new road and start of landscaping of old road.
(vi) Early Spring 2009 Completion of new road.
(vii) Late 2009 complete landscaping of old road.

8. Main matters under discussion with SKANSKA:

(i) length of time of Marling Cross bridge closure
(ii) keeping Hever Court Road open
(iii)diversion routes for the above
(iv) roadworks co-ordination
(v) detail design of the new junctions and connecting roads at Tollgate and Marling Cross which will be transferred to the County
(vi) old A2 - landscaping, footpaths/cyclpaths, equestrian routes and their bridges over new A2, and links to existing.
(vii) permanent signing

A2/A282 Improvement

9. The proposed completion date of this scheme is Spring 2008. Details of the works programme were unavailable at the time of writing of this report; they will be added following the public meeting on 14th December at their visitor and resource centre adjacent to Waller Park, Green Street Green Road, Darenth. However, details of imminent works, including lane closures, are given on the HA's web site www.highways.gov.uk/A2A282 The Costain Community Relations officer is Martin Griffiths and the 24 hour public helpline is 0845 603 6374.

10. Discussions with the Highways Agency over the deferment of the A2 west to north free flow slip and the safety over the 'interim' scheme continued into October but KHS were unable to convince the HA to overturn their decision.

11. KHS are continuing to work with Costains to minimise traffic congestion on Watling Street due to traffic avoiding the road works.

M25 Junction 1B to 3 Widening

12. This scheme is one of several being progressed by the Highways Agency to widen all the 3 lane sections of the M25 to 4 lanes. The scheme between Junctions 1B (Princes Rd, Dartford) and 3 (M20 Swanley) will be carried out within the existing highway boundaries, with no widening of structures and utilising the hard shoulder at pinch points. It has a budget of £65.94 million.

13. The extra benefits of the scheme will be low noise surfacing, an environmental barrier at the Hawley Road bridge to further reduce the noise and reduce the visual impact of the road and traffic, and new lighting to improve the safety of the road. The lighting will be of the latest technology with close cut off beams of light to minimise light pollution.

14. The consultation period for the scheme ends on 14th February. Comments will be considered by the Highway Agency and taken into account as they deem appropriate. The scheme and comments will then be considered by the Secretary of State. As the scheme is widening of the existing carriageways within existing highway limits no actual planning permission is required. Hence, subject to the Secretary of State's approval the scheme is proposed to start in August 2007 with completion in April 2009; a contract period of 20.5 months. This is a short construction period and the contractor Costains proposes to utilise appropriate overnight working to keep the contract period to a minimum.

15. During construction the existing number of lanes will be kept open at peak times, which means for most of the day, although they will be narrow lanes. There will be a 50 mph speed limit with an 'average speed specs speed camera system' as on the A2 scheme. There are no road closures proposed although overhead gantries will be manoeuvred into place overnight using rolling road blocks.

Accountable Officer - Colin Martin tel: 01474 544074

Background Documents – File wT/G/115

Map 1 - A2 Corridor Scheme plan
Map 2 - A2/A282 and M25 J1B to 3 Scheme Plan

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South Street, Deal – Approval to undertake Public Consultation

A report by the East Kent Divisional Manager to the Highways Advisory Board on 9 January 2007

Introduction

1. On the 18th September 2006 a report was tabled to the Dover Joint Transportation Board (JTB) concerning a proposal to improve the South Street area, Deal to provide better and safer bus interchange facilities (see Appendix A). The report recommended approval to a scheme drawing for consultation. The JTB did not support this recommendation (see Appendix B) and thus an improvement to South Street cannot now be considered further.

2. At a subsequent Highways Meeting of the Dover County Members on the 24th October 2006, the opportunity was taken to better understand the reasoning behind this decision. After considering the discussion that took place at the JTB and in recognition that public consultation was still appropriate, the four local Members present gave their unanimous support to my seeking approval to overturn the JTB decision.

Discussion

3. Over the last 3 years, there has been a protracted debate locally about plans to improve the South Street area to cater for the various competing needs, particularly buses. A number of options have been subject to public consultation previously and the latest proposals have been drawn up, taking into account all the comments from the previous consultations. I consider that the new proposals provide the best practical balance between the various needs of South Street and thus the original report to the JTB recommended approval to go to public consultation to share this openly with the public and all interested parties.

4. Most of the JTB Members who commented on the proposal expressed some concern about various aspects of them, acknowledging the difficulty in satisfying all the competing needs, thus concluding that it would probably be better to "do nothing". One local District Member representing Deal felt that the scheme promoted a sensible arrangement to enable progress towards introduction and was openly disappointed at the lack of support in just seeking the publics view at this stage.

5. It remains particularly important to improve interchange facilities here for the new "Diamond" buses that have been introduced earlier this year as a result of a successful 'Kickstart' bid. It would also demonstrate our support for the proposed Quality Bus Partnership in Dover that is to be progressed following the approval of the Dover JTB at their most recent meeting on the 13th November 2006.

6. The opportunity to implement the scheme this financial year has now gone. The associated timescales with the progression of a consultation can now be slightly more relaxed in recognition of the concern that was expressed at the JTB. A bid for funding an improvement to South Street as an Integrated Transport Measure for implementation in 2007/8 is being made.

Conclusions

7. The complex use of South Street and the current layout still give significant cause for concern and the identified need to make improvements has not gone away. Despite the challenge of trying to find an ideal solution it is important that the position reached is shared openly with the local community and that their assistance is gained in a final endeavour to develop and promote a scheme that on balance provides the improvement that County and District Members, the Town Council and the wider public all recognised the need for at the outset of consideration some three years ago. The new proposal attempts to balance up the various hopes, aspirations and concerns in a way that achieves the optimum scheme to enable progression. If this does not emerge now, then disappointingly the JTB recommendation can be duly enacted.

8. Member approval is now sought to my approaching the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste with a view to concluding the formal process to overturn the JTB recommendation and thus to undertake a formal public consultation.

Recommendations

9. Subject to the views of this Board it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that a public consultation on the improvement scheme proposal for South Street be undertaken, contrary to the advisory recommendation of the Dover Joint Transportation Board.

Accountable Officer: Matthew Sims 01227 825335

APPENDIX A

Original South Street, Deal Report to Dover Joint Transportation Board 18/09/2006.

APPENDIX B

Recommendation of Dover Joint Transportation Board 18/09/2006.

161 SOUTH STREET, DEAL: INTERCHANGE PROVISION – AN UPDATE ON PROGRESS

Mr M Smith presented the Board with the revised proposals for South Street, Deal, which it was intended would be submitted for public consultation.
The consensus of opinion among the Board was that the proposals were unsuitable for South Streets role as an important transport interchange location and did not enhance the urban environment of the area. Councillor N J Collor questioned the assumptions made in the proposals over the dimensions of delivery vehicles and loading bay access.
There were concerns expressed that the proposed two week consultation period was inadequate and did not allow sufficient time for key stakeholders to engage. The members of the Board also questioned the list of consultees identified and highlighted the absence of local businesses and District and County Council Ward Councillors.

RESOLVED:
(a) That the scheme proposed for South Street, Deal (EK0115-01) not be sent for consultation.
(b) That the funding allocated to the South Street, Deal scheme be transferred to the Park Street, Deal scheme to enable work to commence as soon as possible.

A251 Safety Improvements – the need for appropriate speed limits

A report by the Mid Kent Transportation Manager to the Highways Advisory Board on 9 January 2007.

Introduction

1. As part of the safety improvements proposed for A251 between Ashford and Faversham, a study was undertaken. This showed that a reduction of the speed limit through the villages of North Street, Badlesmere and Sheldwich from 50 mph to 40 mph and the sections between from 60 mph to 50 mph could be achieved. This was based upon speed surveys, which established the 85th %ile speeds and the injury crash record.

Discussion

2. In line with the latest Government guidance on the setting of speed limits (1/2006), the existing speed limits on all 'A' and 'B' roads will be reviewed during the next 5 years to ensure that those posted limits are still appropriate and meet with the criteria. If they fail to comply, they will be changed in accordance with the criteria. It is possible that some limits could be increased as well as reduced to comply with these requirements. The criteria for the latest guidance now uses **'mean'** speeds rather than the 85th percentile in determining appropriate limits. In this particular case as the safety improvements for A251 are already in the Integrated Transport programme expectations have been raised that the scheme will happen and I am concerned that to delay this further, pending the full review of all A and B roads, would be unwelcome by local residents, local members and the Parish Councils.

3. Table 1 below shows the **mean** speeds that were recorded as part of the speed assessment. This shows that the latest criteria can be met and justifies the implementation of a 40 mph speed limit through the Villages shown.

Table 1

Location	Northbound (Mean speeds)	Southbound (Mean speeds)
North Street	40 mph	42.5mph
Badlesmere	39.5mph	39.6mph
Sheldwich	41.8mph	41.4mph

4. Members will recall that a report outlining the need to set appropriate speed limits was presented to the July 2006 meeting of the Highways Advisory Board (HAB) and was approved. This was then the subject of a report to Swale JTB in September 2006. The proposal to reduce the speed limits through the A251 was the subject of a separate report to this meeting of the Swale JTB. It was explained that 30 mph limits through the above villages did not conform to the previous guidance (Government Guidance Note Circular 1/93), the latest guidance (circular 1/2006) or the resolution of HAB in respect of appropriate speed limits and that a 40 mph limit is the most appropriate. The Police concur with this view. Members of Swale JTB recommended that a 30 mph speed limit through the above villages should be pursued.

5. In setting any limit both the Police and the County Council are seeking limits that foster compliance and as much self- enforcement as possible. This can only be achieved if the criteria are strictly applied and that the majority of drivers 'believe' in the posted limit and understand why it is there. Speed limits are likely to be at their most effective where it reflects the local environment.

6. There is also a risk that by implementing an inappropriate limit, i.e. one that does not relate well to the 'natural' road environment, could encourage driver frustration, bunching, potential for shunts and overtaking manoeuvres which could serve to introduce a new safety problem and actually worsen the existing crash record rather than reduce it.

7. Kent Police's Senior Forensic Collision Investigator believes that setting inappropriate speed limits may 'inadvertently encourage dangerous manoeuvres', because if a large number of motorists fail to comply with the reduced limit, then they are more likely to try and overtake those in the minority who do. There is a risk of encouraging that particular manoeuvre if the road in question does not suit a lower speed limit which could lead to serious head on collisions. Such a situation arose on the A228 (administered by Medway Council). Although a different class of road, a lower limit was introduced against the wishes of the Police and the safety record worsened, rather than improved, as a result of the manoeuvres described.

8. The introduction of an inappropriate limit is likely to breed contempt, lack of compliance and lack of respect for the law and place undue pressure upon the Police. Once there is a realisation among the local community as to the ineffectiveness of the limit, pressure is likely to be placed upon the County Council to introduce traffic calming measures (see the latest County Council policy on traffic calming as endorsed by members at the July 2005 HAB). This would have to take its place in the queue for funding and, alongside the necessary signing thus risks urbanisation of the countryside as well as increasing the financial burden upon this Authority, including the on-going maintenance costs.

Conclusion

10. Speed limits have to be appropriate to the local environment, existing traffic speeds and crash record if they are to bring any benefit in terms of improved road safety. It is therefore paramount that we deal with actual problems rather than the perception of a problem. The views of the Police are paramount in this regard.

Recommendations

11. It is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste that a 40 mph speed limit is introduced on A251 through the villages of North Street, Badlesmere and Sheldwich with a 50 mph speed limit for the remainder of the road.

Accountable Officer – David Bond (01622) 798339